The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and official interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE
SUPPLEMENT

WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1947 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

FIGHT INFANTILE PARALYSIS

Join the MARCH OF DIMES

JANUARY 15-30

Green Pledges New Farmers' Union Full Aid In Big Organizing Drive

Washington, D. C.—America is on the march, and, though for the moment the pendulum seems to have swung backward, this is only a temporary trend, and the farm workers of the United States have a bright outlook, William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, declared at the annual convention of the National Farm Labor Union here.

"Along with the industrial workers of America, the nation's farm workers broke all records in winning the battle of production to make victory in the war certain," Mr. Green said.

"When the war was ended, the farmers' work was not done. A hungry world turned to America for bread and sustenance. Our own people, whose food was severely rationed during the war, looked to the farmers for greater abundance of supplies. The farm workers of the nation responded last year with the hardest kind of work, which produced the highest crop totals in history.

"For such service to the nation and to the world, the farm workers deserve a better fate than second-class citizenship.

"In the years ahead, American agriculture may be afflicted by unprecedented periods of shortages. Foreign markets will disappear because other countries will produce their own and grow their own crops.

"It will then be necessary to develop our domestic markets to a greater extent, or face a severe depression. We must not wait until a depression starts. We must begin to act now. We must provide farm workers and industrial workers with a high level of income level and purchasing power to buy and consume all the food and clothing they need for themselves and their families. Once that is accomplished, America will find itself on the road to lasting prosperity."

Mr. Green declared the farm workers in the nation today face the same problems and also have access to the same opportunities as those organizing workers of our country more than a half century ago.

"But American agriculture has grown up," he said. "Machinery has removed in on the farms. Vast corporate plantations have crushed out and absorbed millions of family-type farms. From a practical point of view, there is no longer any wide disparity between large-scale farming operations and a modern industrial plant.

"The great danger of this mechanical age is that human, values and human rights can be caught in the merciless vortex of the production machine and be ground out of existence.

"In self-protection, the industrial workers of this nation met the full impact of the industrial revolution 65 years ago by organizing trade unions. By this pooling their collective strength against the ruthless greed and exploitation which control industry, the factory workers of this country have been able to win progressively higher standards of living for themselves and their families.

"Today the farm vote is decisive. Organized labor is urgently need that same self-protection. Because of lack of organization, they are being exploited and oppressed and are given second-class attention under the laws of our land. For these reasons the American Federation of Labor, which has always led in the fight for the common man, was glad to issue a charter last August to the National Farm Labor Union.

"We are behind you, more than seven million strong, and are determined to give you full support in all your efforts to organize the unorganized farm workers of the nation.

"Potentially, the National Farm Labor Union can be the largest in the country. We are ready to help you reach that goal, for only through organization and united action can you achieve for the millions of farm workers throughout the length and breadth of this land the high economic and social standards and the political freedoms which they have earned by their hard work and their loyalty to American principles."

Mr. Green emphasized that it was no intention of the farm labor union to organize the occasional farm migrant hand on the small family-type farm.

"Your organizing efforts are directed toward the large agricultural enterprises which virtually run factories in the fields. The huge plantations, with highly mechanized methods of production, the agricultural processing plants, are rapidly pushing the small farmer out of business. In thus doing this by unfair competition and by almost inhuman methods. Frequently the low production costs of these factory farms are wrung out of the sweat and blood of an army of hired hands who work long hours under peak seasons and then turned adrift for months at a time. The individual farmer would ever treat the hired hands in such a manner. They are fields with such callous cruelty.

"Frequently, the employers with which the Government responds to the needs of farmers are the operate farms. It is indeed surprising to find that the United States looks to the actual work on the farms of America's agricultural wealth. There are the facts:

"First: Farm workers are still not included under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act and therefore have no legal protection of their right to join unions of their own choice and to bargain collectively with their employers.

"Second: Farm workers are excluded from the benefits of unemployment insurance, the social security system, which provides unemployment insurance, retirement benefits, assistance, and compensation.

"Third: The Fair Labor Standards Act also excludes farm workers, thereby denying them the protection of minimum wage and maximum hour standards.

"Other omissions are evil which Congress should remedy at once. The American Federation of Labor, at its last convention, unanimously endorsed this legislative program and will back up your efforts to obtain legislation from Congress.

"In some parts of the country, especially in the South, agricultural workers suffer from even more dangerous discrimination which deprives them of their constitutional rights to vote and exercise their field of economic opportunity to the most menial and poorly-paying jobs.

"The American Federation of Labor throughout its entire history has opposed discrimination because of race, color or creed. Such discrimination is unfair, unjust and evil. On the most basic American principles of democracy. Yet it exists. In the 48 States still have in effect poll-tax laws which restrict the right to vote.

"It is fitting and proper that this great convention of the National Farm Labor Union should meet here in Washington's capital, almost under the very eyes of the Congress and the Administration leaders of the Government, because by such proximity you can study at close hand the shocking neglect with which the agencies of the Government have treated the problems of farm workers.

"There no doubt that the people of this country will be surprised to learn that farm workers are treated as second-class citizens of America, excluded from the benefits of those institutions which our social and economic life have provided for workers in other lines of endeavor."

AFL Atomic Trades Unit Signs Big Oak Ridge Plant

Atlanta, Ga.—Announcement was made here by George L. Googe, chairman of the AFL Southern Organizing Campaign, of an agreement between the Monsanto Chemical Co., and the AFL Atomic Trades and Labor Council, covering the employes of the Clinton Laboratories at Oak Ridge, Tenn., which the Monsanto Co. operates for the Government. The Clinton Laboratories is the world's foremost nuclear energy research project.

The articles of agreement are embodied in a formal collective bargaining contract now before the War Department and Atomic Commission for approval.

The union won wage increases from 6 to 20 cents an hour. The secret increase affects top pay group, hourly rates range from an 82½ cent minimum for janitors and unskilled laborers to $2.80½ for certain service personnel mechanics. The rate for journeymen mechanics in approved with other occupations is $1.78½ an hour. There are 21 job classifications, and there is a provision barring work stoppages, lockouts and slowdowns.

The union was recognized as the exclusive bargaining agent for the maintenance of membership provision in the contract, effective for the irrevocable for the period of the contract. This clause further provides that a 15-day period immediately preceding the fifth anniversary date of the agreement shall constitute an "escape period" for union membership and dues deduction.

The grievance procedure is on a four-step basis, with close time limits at each level, with the final decision to be rendered by the War Department and Atomic Commission for approval.

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U. S. DROPS $17 FOR DISLOYALTY

Washington, D. C.—Formal report of the Civil Service Commission revealed that $17 of 599 persons rated as "ineligible on disloyalty grounds" for Government jobs were either members of the Communist Party or active followers of the Communist "party line." The commission disclosed that 355 persons were ruled off the Federal payroll in 1946, 144 more in 1945 and 81 last year on grounds of disloyalty.

RECORD GLASS OUTPUT

New York City.—An unprecedented demand for glass in the building industry last year brought into play record production and facilities boosting output to a new peak, it was reported here by the Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co. The company announced production of a record volume of polished plate glass and window glass, in addition to safety glass for automotive requirements.

House Hears Dondero Hit WFTU As Agency of Reds

Washington, D. C.—Charges that the World Federation of Trade Unions is acting as the instrument for a worldwide attack on American foreign policy were made in the House by Representative Dondero of Michigan. This is being done, he declared, by forces us to accede to Soviet expansionist aims.

Citing recent declarations of AFL leaders that this is a "desperate attempt by the Kremlin to grab control of organized labor the world over," Mr. Dondero told the House that, despite denials of Gen. Lucius D. Clay, U. S. military governor in Germany:

"The charge of the American Federation of Labor that the four American-trained labor manpower officers and chiefs in Germany had recently conferred in Paris with officials of the so-called World Federation of Trade Unions 'to organize fascist-minded unions into affiliation with the WFTU to secure eventual affiliation at the German trade unions,' has not been denied by Michael Ahern, American CIO representative at the WFTU meeting.

"It should also be noted," Mr. Dondero added, "that Mrs. Ida Urwick, who recently appointed general counsel to Lieut. Gen. Clay, is a member of the pro-established ties to Communist organizations and whose loyalty is highly questionable.

"Another adviser and close associate of Mr. Lowenthal is George Shaw Wheeler, whose loyalty record is even more questionable.

Representative Dondero cited the National Maritime Union of the CIO as one of the affiliates of the World Federation, which he asserted had shown "a policy of definite hostility toward the United States." This was to be marked, he added, that he was "seriously concerned about the attitude of Gen. Lucius D. Clay, designated by our representatives not only in Germany but throughout the world."

"Coupled with this agitation," he went on, "certain Soviet leaders in the United States of inciting war against the Soviet Union.

"The WFTU and its affiliated organizations are pledged to encourage the Communist policy of international class struggle instead of American commerce and industry.

"The World Federation of Trade Unions has not dared to declare Communist China, Poland, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Finland or any other Soviet puppet state, it has only declared for the independence of Puerto Rico."

Supreme Court Is Expected to Rule On Miners' Case Late In February

Washington, D. C.—Decision of the United States Supreme Court on the contempt fines of $3,500,000 levied on the United Mine Workers and its president, John L. Lewis, is expected to be issued sometime late in February. The sharply divided court will test the legality of the Government's use of an injunction to head off the November soft coal work stoppage, and the Government, in turn, charged the miners with ignoring Federal power to issue continued operation orders.

UMW Counsel Welly K. Hopkins told the court that Attorney General Clark's statement supporting the fines was "quite likely" illegal.

"It had better been said in political forum than a court of law," he told the court.

Hammering vigorously at Justice T. Alan Goldsborough's imposition of the fines, Mr. Hopkins charged that the rulings were illegal and lacking in authority.

Joseph A. Padway, general counsel for the American Federation of Labor, supporting the position taken by Mr. Hopkins, contended that the District Court erred in granting an injunction on the basis of the Norris-La Guardia Act.

Counsel for the union contended that, merely because the mines were seized by the Government during a labor dispute, the miners were not Government employes in the sense of civil service, and other Government workers who struck were left free to quit their service.

Mr. Hopkins said that the fine could not stand because the contempt of court prosecution was brought in the charges were not brought as charges of civil contempt of court ought to be brought, he said, and they should be brought as a charge of criminal contempt of court ought to be brought.

Mr. Lewis and the UMW were not told what of contempt they were accused of, he said, and did not know for sure until they heard Justice Goldsborough finding them guilty of both kinds.

Justice Frankfurter asked whether Mr. Hopkins made these objections before the District Court. Mr. Hopkins said he thought he had, and added that even if he was wrong about the fines in the charges, the fines were too high to be allowed to stand. He told the court in addition to the history, that Mr. Lewis was fined twice while Congress provided a penalty of $1,000 for the first offense.

The Government maintains that these acts do not stop the Government from levying fines cumulatively when acting as a sovereign to protect its essential welfare.

Mr. Padway told the court that he was not prepared to say that the Government relied strongly upon the Supreme Court decision in the Bedaux Debs case, in which the noted Socialist leader was fined $1,000 for each of 10 counts.

Mr. Padway said it was true that Congress had given Congress the right to remove the Government's power to issue injunctions in labor disputes, but he added that this amendment was voted down, and that it was plain Congress did not mean the Government to be able to issue injunctions and not to strike.

Mr. Padway said it was true that Congress passed the Norris-La Guardia Act over the House the act would not apply to Government employes, but added that there was no such provision in the coal case.

"Why not?" asked Justice Frankfurter.

Mr. Padway said it was because the Government expressly said the miners were not Government employes.

The Government was only in possession of the mines, he added, answering questions from Justices Vinson, Black, Douglas, Reed, Burton, Black and Frankfurter—but the mine owners had no interest in the operating cost and got the profits.

Schwellenbach Regards Stabilization As Major Factor In Industrial Peace

Washington, D. C.—Health and welfare fund clauses in collective bargaining contracts were approved by Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach in his annual report to Congress as "an effective and flexible means of providing greater social security through collective bargaining."

In his report to Congress Mr. Schwellenbach summarized the year's developments in labor relations and emphasized that stabilization of the economy would take precedence over other thing to promote industrial peace.

He stated that under stabilized conditions, "collective bargaining can best play its creative role it always can be the standard of life of the workers and in protecting their status as free human beings. Stabilization, however, may provide the basis for the solution of the labor-strife that characterized much of the first postwar year."

It was in connection with his discussion of labor-management relations that he spoke approvingly of the increasing use of health and welfare funds in union contracts.

While he felt that the general economic outlook for the immediate future is favorable if price stability is quickly achieved, Mr. Schwellenbach felt that "the decisive test for the postwar economy will come when the deferred demand of the war years for capital goods and equipment has been met."

He added that "our economic health must depend mainly, of course, upon the foresight and adaptability of labor, management and consumers to work together through their organizations and their Government for economic stability.

"The Secretary urged that "stability must be related at a high level of output, and the products of industry must be equitably distributed if there is to be a steady flow in production. "We need a clearer understanding of the fact that in the long run only the welfare of farmers are inseparably bound up with the welfare of workers of city workers.

"The Government agreement that steps to improve efficiency and economy in the use of labor in short supply is vital alike to the success of the program of stabilization and the attainment of wages and living standards."

Referring to the high level of labor disputes, the Secretary "warned that the continuation of such a stimulation created in haste and without adequate preparation is inevitable that industrial strife is actually a long-run aggravation of economic frustrations."

"Insecurity is a primary cause of industrial unrest," he declared. "In a period of reconversion, with rising prices, scarcity of commodities and the concentration of threat to workers' living standards, peaceful adjustments are much more difficult to attain. Hence the problem of labor-management disputes could not be solved by legislation limited to the establishment of techniques for the expeditious settlement of such disputes."

Green Urges Bargaining Talks Rather Than Portal Pay Suits

Text of Green's Letter On Portal Pay Policy

Washington, D. C.—Following is the text of a letter from AFL President William Green to all affiliated unions, outlining the Federation's policy with respect to the portal-to-portal pay issue. It was accompanied by a detailed memorandum containing the latest and most accurate information on industry's views with regard to portal-to-portal pay:

For two weeks, wide publicity has been given to court actions filed by certain labor unions in an attempt to recover back pay for their members for travel time and other activities preparatory to, subsequent to, or changing clothes and preparing for work, claiming this to be time worked within the meaning of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

Very few of these suits have been brought by unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. It is the long-established policy of the American Federation of Labor to rely upon collective bargaining through direct negotiations between unions and employers to settle differences between them regarding wages, hours and working conditions of the workers concerned. What constitutes time worked for the purpose of figuring straight-time and overtime compensation can best be determined by labor and management over the bargaining table.

Any question arising in collective bargaining under a contract mutually agreed upon, is under obligation first to present to the other party of the agreement any question that may arise regarding the terms of that agreement.

Appeal to authority before all the voluntary means of resolving differences have been exhausted, invites invasion of the right of labor and management to contract about their affairs. Such untimely and unwarranted resort to administrative or judicial intervention is inconsistent with the mutual rights and responsibilities established by employers and unions through private contract in a free society.

Mr. Green, whose letter was accompanied by an analytical statement on travel time, to aid national and international unions in determining their course of action, declared by implication that "all the voluntary means of resolving differences between unions and employers regarding wages, hours and working conditions, invites invasion of the right of labor and management to contract about their affairs."

"Such untimely and unwarranted resort to administrative or judicial intervention is inconsistent with the mutual rights and responsibilities established by employers and unions through private contract in a free society," he said.

Mr. Green's declaration was strongly supported by the International Teamsters, whose executive board, meeting in Miami, adopted a resolution declaring the Teamsters would not make any claim for back pay. The resolution declared that the only major exception to this policy were the miners, who "were sustained in their claim by the highest court in the land." The resolution also declared that such a situation as others is not morally justified, because it was not agreed to in contracts signed by these unions of the CIO and their employers.

Meanwhile, Walter Mason, a legislative representative of the AFL, appearing before the Senate subcommittee considering this issue, vigorously opposed bills for changes in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

He discussed particularly the Wiley and Capehart measures. Enactment of either measure, he declared, would place the American workers back where they were before the time when they were paid by the day, regardless of the hours they worked.

The Federation, he emphasized, had pioneered in the fight for enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act, he said.

"It has offered to millions of unfortunate workers the opportunity to rise to industrial citizenship, or, in some instances, a chance, through unionization, to attain collective bargaining. It has given to employees and their achieve industrial emancipation.

"It is a proud record of this achievement, but feel that we should be considering today what legislation that would provide a substantial increase in the minimum wage standard, and to strengthen the law by broadening the coverage to include the many millions of workers still excluded from the benefits of the law, and also working under conditions detrimental to the maintenance of the minimum standard of living necessary for their health, efficiency and general well being, rather than legislation that will lessen the act itself."

The Federation, Mr. Mason said, as he analyzed both the Wiley and Capehart bills in detail, is strongly opposed to both measures, because it is the opinion of labor that the gains registered by labor over a long period of years.

"They would seek to define 'work time' and 'travel time,' but actually do not do so, since they refer back to existing customs, usage and collective agreements. These, of course, vary, depending on the collective agreement," he said.

"If the labor and management enter into negotiated agreements, the terms of these will be controlling. Unless agreements can be depended upon by both parties, collective bargaining can not be continued.

"The minimum wage and maximum hour standards of the Fair Labor Employment Act are of crucial importance to the future prosperity of all American workers. The magnitude of the portal-to-portal pay claims has been exaggerated, and should not provide an excuse for emasculation of the act itself."

BAKERY SALES HIGH

Chicago.—Bakery goods sold in the last year reached a total of approximately $2,000,000,000, it was announced here by Harry W. Zinsmaster, secretary of the Board of Governors of the American Bakers' Association.

MILLION WOMEN QUIT

Washington, D. C.—The Labor Department disclosed that 1,000,000 women workers left factories and office jobs last year to go back to their kitchens.

Hines Says Employers Hold Key to Better Relations

Washington, D. C.—The real key to industrial relations problems in the United States today rests in the hands of employers and other groups who are waging warfare upon the organized workers of America.

This was the declaration of Lewis G. Hines, National Legislative Representative of the American Federation of Labor, speaking on the American Forum of the Air program.

"Will new labor legislation help our economy?" Mr. Hines asked. "It depends on what kind of legislation," he said. "Legislation improving our social security standards, as sponsored by the American Federation of Labor, would most certainly help our economy. Talk of new legislation leading to the avalanche of punitive antiunion labor bills that have been introduced since the opening of the Eightieth Congress would be a serious setback to the organized labor movement in America, the answer is emphatically 'no.'

"A more general acceptance of the principles of collective bargaining which have been opposing it would go a long way to achieve our much desired goal of industrial peace.

"The American Federation of Labor will assume the offensive against those who would ruin our economy. We challenge the sponsors of all antilabor legislation, whether they be members of Congress or the National Association of Manufacturers and their allied groups, to show cause why labor should not be given a fair hearing before the bar of public opinion for their attempts to improve management relations and destroy the trade union movement. Collective bargainer, representation of labor will lead to industrial peace and the ultimate elimination of the profit system. Passage of punitive legislation would be sure to follow. I have confidence that the overwhelming majority of the citizens can people will join in opposing the enactment of crippling antiunion legislation now before Congress."

Cost of Living Shows Decline As Food Supplies In U.S. Rise

Washington, D. C.—The high cost of living came closer to the reach of the average American worker as increasing supplies of foods and other consumer goods were available in a rising consumer resistance, eased price tensions and moved distribution channels toward the end of the week of January 14.

The down trend in food prices was marked by lower quotations for wheat, corn, hogs, lard, butter, eggs and poultry. The decline had been under way for at least six weeks.

Isolated declines for industrial products also showed trends in addition to hides and wools.

Hide futures at the Public Service Co. announced a reduction in electric rates despite rising costs. The same State announced a drop in retail and wholesale coal prices.

Some New York City chain food stores featured lower egg prices. The wholesale market dropped 2 to 3 cents a pound, pulling lower 20 cents for the last three weeks to around 70 cents and for this week 60 to 65 cents.

The Chicago wholesale market also declined.

In the Chicago grain futures market, wheat dropped 9¾ to 11 cents. Oats lost ¾ to 1 cent.

Talk of consumer resistance to present prices for some textiles helped to relieve pressures at least in the $4 a bale at one time.

Easy cotton for quick delivery dipped $1.25 a bale at New Orleans.

Textile manufacturers in New York reported hesitant demand for heavy goods for commercial purposes.

The official New York price of silver was quoted at 74¾ cents an ounce, the third setback of the week.

Hide futures at Chicago declined on an outside of nine-tenths of a cent a pound, pulling lesser losses in its wake.

Sales of poultry again declined at New York, putting lesser for the last months at 30 to 40 cents a pound. Eggs also slipped.

FRANK HOPKINS, 42, DIES; INDIANA LABOR EDITOR

Michigan City, Ind.—Frank Hopkins, 42, editor of the Indiana Labor Beacon, died suddenly here of coronary thrombosis shortly before his death he had returned to his home from a meeting of executives of the paper in his chest.

Mr. Hopkins' editorials in the Beacon were widely reprinted and his art work was widely known in labor press circles. His cartoon practice appeared in the Chicago Federationist, "Cortie and Mac," two shop girls, and "Mr. Hopkins Says," a three penny factory hands.

Unmarried, Mr. Hopkins took an active interest in Boy Scout activities, first as Scout then as Scout Master. Funeral services were held Thursday.

STASSEN RAPS BALL BILLS FOR CURBING LABOR RIGHTS

Senator Ball's violent attitude toward labor, editor of the Labor Beacon, died suddenly here of coronary thrombosis shortly before his death he had returned to his home from a meeting of executives of the paper in his chest.

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